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Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SIG-01 MMO-01 PM-04 NSC-05
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TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 066450

EMBASSIES PLEASE PASS CONSULATES

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VN, US

SUBJECT: US-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS: WOODCOCK COMMISSION GUIDANCE FOR USE WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS

1. IN ADDITION TO SUMMARY OF WOODCOCK COMMISSION'S REPORT CARRIED WIRELESS FILE, MARCH 23, ADDRESSEE POSTS MAY DRAW ON FOLLOWING GUIDANCE IN CONVERSATIONS WITH HOST GOVTS.

2. COMMISSION WAS NOT EMPOWERED TO NEGOTIATE, EXCEPT ON TECHNICAL MATTERS DIRECTLY RELATING TO MIA'S, AND DID NOT MAKE ANY COMMITMENTS FOR USG. PROGRESS WAS MADE ON MIA ISSUE BUT IT WAS NOT RESOLVED. BOTH VIETNAMESE AND LAO RAISED QUESTION OF U.S. AID, WITH FORMER PLACING IT IN GENERAL CONTEXT OF OVERALL US-SRV RELATIONS RATHER THAN
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PARIS ACCORDS. COMMISSION AVOIDED BEING CONTENTIOUS, BUT POINTED OUT LEGAL BARRIERS TO SUCH AID, AS WELL AS OBVIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEM IN VIEW OF CONTINUING MIA ISSUE. IN GENERAL, COMMISSION CONCLUDED THAT ITS RECEPTION BY SRV REFLECTS LATTER'S DESIRE TO RECIPROCATE PRESIDENT CARTER'S POSITION OF PUTTING THE PAST BEHIND US AND CONSTRUCTING A NEW RELATIONSHIP.

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3. AFTER HEARING REPORT OF COMMISSION, PRESIDENT CARTER RESPONDED BY ACCEPTING VIETNAMESE PRIME MINISTER'S PROPOSAL

FOR FURTHER DIRECT DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS ON NORMALIZATION. NO DATES OR AGENDA HAVE BEEN FIXED FOR THESE DISCUSSIONS, NOR HAS OUR REPRESENTATIVE BEEN NAMED. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS ALSO INDICATED THAT, ASSUMING TALKS GO WELL, USG WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH VIETNAM'S ADMISSION TO UN. THESE MOVES ARE FULLY CONSONANT WITH COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS. THEY ARE LIMITED IN SCOPE, AND DO NOT INVOLVE ISSUES SUCH AS TRADE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS OR AID. USG INTENDS PROCEED CAREFULLY AND AT MEASURED PACE WHERE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES ARE CONCERNED.

4. BOTH VIETNAMESE AND LAO EXPRESSED CONCERN TO COMMISSION OVER WHAT THEY CLAIM TO BE THAI HOSTILITY TOWARDS THEIR COUNTRIES. THE LAOTIANS ALSO ACCUSED USG OF SUPPORTING THAI EFFORTS TO SUPPORT LAO DISSIDENTS. IN HANOI, COMMISSION DID NOT ACCEPT ALLEGATION RE THAILAND BUT EXPRESSED HOPE FOR PEACE THROUGHOUT THE REGION. IN RESPONSE TO LAO, COMMISSIONERS WOODCOCK AND MANSFIELD FORCEFULLY AND CATEGORICALLY REFUTED LAO ALLEGATIONS AND INDICATED THAT U.S. HAS NO HOSTILE INTENTION TOWARD LPDR, AS WELL AS EXPRESSING HOPE FOR PEACE THROUGHOUT AREA.

5. WE HOPE TO BUILD ON THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION. AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE KEENLY AWARE OF THE MANY BILATERAL ISSUES THAT REMAIN TO BE SETTLED, AND ARE DETERMINED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

MOVEMENT TOWARD MORE NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN USG AND SRV AND LAOS NOT DETRACT FROM OUR CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION; AND THAT IT CONTRIBUTE TO LESSENING OF TENSIONS IN REGION. COMMISSION REPEATEDLY UNDERSCORED NEW ADMINISTRATION'S DESIRE FOR PEACE, STABILITY, AND PROSPERITY OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF FUTURE TALKS ON NORMALIZATION.

6. WE EXPECT THAT DURING THIS PROCESS OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE REGION WILL NOT HESITATE TO CONVEY THEIR VIEWS TO US, AND CAN ASSURE THEM THAT WE WILL TAKE THESE VIEWS INTO CONSIDERATION.
VANCE

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